The Christians beſt Garment

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THE

CHRISTIANS

Beſt Garment:

OR,

The putting on of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Wherein the abſolute neceſſity, excellency, and uſefulneſs of Chriſt, as a Garment, to believing Souls, is briefly opened and applied.

Secondly, The naked, miſerable, loſt, and undone condition of all Unbelievers, who have not put on this Garment, diſcovered.

Thirdly and laſtly, Some few brief, but powerful Motives to perſwade us to the putting on of this Garment, with directions how to live to the glory of Chriſt here, that ſo we may live with Chriſt hereafter in glory.

The third Edition.

By a godly, able, and faithful Servant of Jeſus Chriſt. *John Hart.*

Rom. 13. 14. *Put ye on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

Col. 3. 4. *When Chriſt who is our life ſhall appear, then ſhall ye alſo appear with him in glory.*

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BIBLIOTHECA·BODLEIANA

THE
Christians best Garment.
OR THE
Putting on of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 13. 12, 13, 14.

The night is far spent, the day is at hand, let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

Let us walk honestly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying:

But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.

IN these words, beloved, which I have now read unto you, we have these two parts.

In the first place, we have some things which the Apostle endeavours to perswade Christians from.

In the second place, we have some things which the Apostle endeavours to perswade Christians to.

The things perswaded from, are the works of darkness; the things perswaded to are these.

1. That we put on the armour of light, and that we walk honestly.

2. The Apostle having exhorted us to this two-fold duty.

1. The casting off the works of darkness, and the putting on the armour of light, here sets down expressly some Christian directions how this is to be done; and that two wayes.

1. Negatively, and then,

2. Affirmatively.

1. Negatively, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envy.

2. Affirmatively, by putting on the Lord Jesus Christ, and denying of the works of the flesh; and the motives here laid down, whereupon the Apostle enjoyns this duty, are these

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in the 12. verſe, The night is far ſpent, the day is at hand, therefore (ſaith he) let us caſt off the works of darkneſs, and let us put on the armour of light.

Where by the way, we may obſerve, that works of darkneſs are very unſuitable and unſeaſonable to the times of the Goſpel, light and darkneſs are contrary.

In the words then you ſee, 1. Here is a duty exhorted unto, and that is laid down in the 12. verſe.

And then 2. you have here alſo the Apoſtles amplification and illuſtration of this duty here exhorted unto, and that is ſet down particularly in the 13. and 14. verſes,

The duty exhorted unto you ſee here is two-fold.

1. Here is ſomething to be caſt off.

And then 2. Here is ſomething to be put on.

1. The things to be caſt off, are the works of darkneſs.

2. The things to be put on, are the armor of light: Let us caſt off the works darkneſs, and let us put on the armor of light.

And as the exhortation is two-fold, so likewise are the reasons whereupon the Apostle grounds his exhortation also.

1. The night is far spent.

And 2. the day is at hand.

Before I proceed to the observation, give me leave a little to open the words unto you; and first, I shall endeavour to shew what is here meant by the night, and then secondly, what is here meant by the day: by the night here may be meant the times of darkness and ignorance, in which the Gentiles lived in before the breaking forth of the Gospel of Christ, and those times may very well be compared to the night for these three reasons.

First, In the night men cannot so well see their way, and therefore may the more easily wander out of their way, for it is onely the want of light that makes men to erre.

2. In the night no thing is visible or discernable but darkness, all light is then extinguished; the blind man is not able to value or judge what a

mercy

mercy it is to have the fruition and enjoyment of the light of the Sun.

3. The night is the most suitablest time and season for the doing of evil, in Job 24. 14, 15, 16. The murderer (saith Job) rising with the light killeth the poor and needy, and in the night is as a thief. The eye also of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight, saying, No eye shall see me, and disguiseth his face. In the dark they dig through houses, they know not the light. They that are drunk (saith the Apostle) are drunk in the night, 1 Thes. 5. 7. In Psal. 25. 20. The dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.

And then secondly, by the day here is meant the times of the Gospel, it is night in the soul, till such time as the day light of the Gospel breaks forth and shines into it, Matth. 4 16. The people which sate in darkness saw a great light, and to them that sate in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up.

In John 13. 19. Light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather then light; and why so, the reason

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is (saith he) because their deeds were evil. For every one that doth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. Ephes. 5. 8. Ye were sometimes darkness, (saith the Apostle) but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light.

In 1 Pet. 2. 9. God hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light. Luke 1. 78, 79. The day-spring from on high hath visited us: To give light to them that sit in darkness.

In Acts 26. 17, 18. The Apostle was sent to the Gentiles, to turn them from darkness unto light.

In 1 John 2. 8. The darkness is past, and the true light (saith the Apostle) now shineth.

In Acts 17. 30. The times of Heathenisme are there called the times of ignorance, and it must nèeds be night in such souls wherein Christ the Sun of righteousness never did arise; as it is never day in the world until the Sun ariseth, so it is never day in the soul till Christ the Sun of righteousness ariseth with healing in his wings.

Now

Now there are several useful and profitable points of doctrine, which naturally flow from hence for our instruction and edification, I shall onely name them, and so proceed to that which I chiefly intend.

The first point of doctrine is this, that works of darknes are works of the night, night works.

Secondly, that the times of the Gospel are times of light.

Thirdly, that in the day of the Gospel all these works of darknes are to be cast off: when the Sun shines, it dispels and scatters all those mists and fogs of darknes that lie upon the earth; so when Christ the Sun of Righteousnes ariseth in the soul, he dispels and scatters all those mists and fogs of sin and wickednes which naturally ariseth in the soul.

Fourthly, in Gospel times, or times of light, men should live Gospel lives, or walk in the light of the Gospel: while ye have light walk as children of the light. Walk (saith our Saviour, John 5. 35, 36.) while ye have light, left darknes come upon you:

for

for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light.

Fifthly, that rioting and drunkennes, chambering and wantonnes, strife and envy, are not works of the day, but of the night.

Sixthly, they that would live as becomes the Gospel of Christ, should cast off all those unfruitful works of darknes.

Seventhly, that Jesus Christ is a Christians garment.

Eightly, that Jesus Christ is a garment to be put on.

Ninthly, that all of Christ, whole Christ is to be put on; put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ as a King to rule you, as a Priest to offer up himself a sacrifice for you, and as a Prophet to teach and and instruct you.

Tenthly and lastly, that the putting on of the Lord Jesus Christ is accompanied with the casting off all sinful and fleshly works.

Now the point of doctrine that I shall chiefly insist upon shall be this, namely

namely, that the Lord Jesus Christ is a garment; in handling whereof I shall briefly touch upon, and speak something to all the rest by way of use and application.

The Doctrine then to be insisted upon is this, That the Lord Jesus Christ is a Christians garment; in handling whereof, I shall endeavour by the assistance of God to shew you the natural agreement and resemblance that is betwæn the Lord Jesus Christ and our natural garments.

First, wherein they do agree, and secondly, wherein they do not agree.

And having done this, in the next place, God willing, I shall endeavour to shew you what kinde of garment Christ is, and how this garment is to be worn.

Thirdly and lastly, to whom and for what he is a garment; and then having done this, I shall briefly endeavour to give you some directions by way of motives to perswade you to the putting on of this garment, and so conclude all by the assistence of God in a word or two of use and application.

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I begin with the first of these, wherein the Lord Jesus Christ is or may be said to be a garment, and this this will appeare briefly in these two things.

1. Considering what we are; and
2. Considering what Christ doth.

1. Christ may be said to be a garment, considering what we are by nature, the best of us are but, as St. John saith; Rev. 3. 17. empty, naked, miserable sinners: the best garments we have by nature are nothing else but rags, yea filthy rotten rags, as the Prophet Isaiah expresses it in Isa. 64. 6. We are all of us by nature poor and blinde, miserable and naked, till Christ appears in us, thereupon the Apostle Paul, in Phil. 3. 8, 9. desires so earnestly that he might be found in Christ, not having on his own righteousnes, which he accounted drosse and dung in comparison of Christ and his righteousnes.

2. Christ is a garment in regard of what he doth to us; he covers our nakednes by casting over us the skirts of his love, as in Ezek. 16 8.

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And to illustrate this a little, I shall here take occasion to shew you wherin Christ may be said to be a garment, by giving you the resemblances that are between the Lord Jesus Christ and our natural garments; and what our garments are to our bodies, the same, and much more is Christ to our souls.

Now the natural use of our natural garments are chiefly these three.

1. Our natural garments are for necessity.

2. For distinction.

3. For ornament.

First, for necessity; our natural garments are necessary, yea, they are of necessity, we cannot be well without them: they are needful for us to cover and shelter us, to cherish and preserve our weak, frail, naked bodies, from all the dangers and incumbrances which would irresistably fall upon us, without the use of them.

Our garments are useful to cover and preserve us from the cold blustering storms of the world, how unable would our frail weak mortal bodies

be

be to subsist and live without the natural use of our natural garments, to cherish and preserve us; and this, and more then this doth Christ to our souls.

As our bodies are not able to subsist without cloathes, no more are our souls able to subsist without Christ, who is the life and garment of our souls.

As our natural garments serve to defend us from the cold blustering storms of the weather, so Christ the garment of our souls preserves and shelters us from all those raging assaults of Satan, which in the world we are often, yea, alwayes lyable unto.

Secondly, as our natural garments serve to defend us from the cold stormes of winde and weather, so likewise they serve to defend us from the violent and scorching heat of the Sun.

As in the blustering storms of rain and cold, our garments preserves us from perishing under them; so in the violent scorching heat of the Sun, our gar-

garments serve to keep us from being melted and devoured by its violent and scorching heat.

Of the like use is Christ to our souls; as 'tis onely Christ that can preserve us from the cold blustering storms of the world, so 'tis onely Christ that can preserve us from the violent and scorching heat of persecutions and fiery tryals in the world.

A second use of our natural garments is for distinction, to distinguish between sex and sex, noble and ignoble, high and low, rich and poor, magistrates and people; so likewise Christ is a garment for distinction, yea, he is the onely distinguishing garment in the world.

Christ distinguisheth the saint from the sinner; the holy from the unholy, the sheep from the wolves; yea, the true sheep from the wolves in sheeps cloathing; the sincere and upright souls from formal falshood, hypocritical Professors: and as it distinguisheth the saints from sinners here, so it will also distinguish them hereafter; they that have not on this garment at

the last day, shall be set on the left hand of Christ in judgement; its this wedding garment that distinguisheth who are the guests for the marriage feast, there is no coming to heaven without it.

Thirdly, the natural use of our natural garments are for ornament, our uncomely parts being cloathed become abundant more comely; our bodies being decked and adorned by clothing, although in themselves uncomely, do thereby become beautiful and lovely: of the like use is Christ to our souls; there is nothing in the world, beloved, that will so adorn your souls as this garment of Christ; yea, it is the onely becoming garment, it will make your souls amiable and lovely, yea, altogether lovely, our souls being cloathed upon with this garment of Christ and his righteousnes, will appear lovely and beautiful in the eyes of God himself, and by it we are made to be acceptable in the Lord: as we are in our selves, we are vile, wretched, sinful, deformed creatures, altogether un-

unlovely, but in Christ we are made to be amiable and beautiful, yea, altogether lovely.

Having thus given you the resemblances between Christ and our natural garments, and having shewed you briefly wherein they do agree, I shall now in a word or two, shew you wherein they disagree, or rather wherein this spiritual and heavenly garment of Christ superexceeds and excells all the garments in the world, be they never so rich and costly; and herein lies the disagreement.

First, our natural garments are not durable, they will last us but a little while before they be quite worn out; but Jesus Christ is a durable and lasting garment, yea, an everlasting garment that will never be worn out while thou livest, though thou livest never so long, it will last thee for ever and ever, both here and hereafter.

Secondly, our natural garments they are the worse for wearing, yea, the longer we wear them the worse they grow; and at the last, by being

over-worn, they come to be worth nothing? I, but it is not thus with Christ, this heavenly garment of Christ is the better for wearing, and the longer we wear it, the better it is, and the better we are, it doth not onely grow better it self, but it also makes us grow better. I, but it is not thus with our natural garments, they if they be worn often, or by often wearing, they grow worse and worse, and at last they decay.

Thirdly, our natural garments as we put them on in the morning, so we put them off at night; but where ever Jesus Christ is put on as a garment, he is not, nay, he cannot be put off again; Christ is a garment as well for the night as for the day: the soul that hath once given up it self to Christ, by a true and saving faith, can never be taken away, I mean not finally from Christ, by all the craft and policy of the Devil; they that are chosen by God in Christ, shall be preserved by God in Christ.

Fourthly, our natural garments grow out of fashion very often and sud-

suddenly, but Jesus Christ is a garment that will never be out of fashion; a better then which can never be imagined nor invented.

Jesus Christ is a garment as well for Summer as for Winter, for all weathers; in the Summer heat of persecutions and tryals, Christ is a garment, either to keep them off, or else to sustain us under them: and in the Winter of adversity Jesus Christ is a garment to defend and cherish us from all evils; let the storms be never so great, let the fire be never so hot, Christ can sustain and uphold his people; witness Daniel in the Lions Den, and the Children in the fiery Furnace, &c.

Fifthly, our natural garments they are fitted to our bodies, but to this garment of Christ our souls are made fit; Christ is a garment made fit for all souls, natural garments if they fit one, they are either too big or too little for another; but Jesus Christ is a garment fit, or made fit for all souls, for souls of all sorts; a garment for men, and a garment for women: a

garment for parents, and a garment for children: a garment for poor, and a garment for rich: a garment for Magistrates, and a garment for Ministers, and a garment for people: a garment for Jews, and a garment for Gentiles. Christ is and will be to all his people, an ornament of grace here, and of glory hereafter.

I come now in the next place to shew you what kinde of garment Jesus Christ is, and how he is to be worn; and I shall briefly give it you in these following considerations.

And first of all, he is a precious garment: to you therefore which believe he is precious, 1 Pet. 2. 7. precious in regard of his nature, God and man; precious in regard of his worth and excellency, the chiefest and the choicest of ten thousands. But I must not insist upon these things.

Secondly, Christ is a costly garment, a garment that's said to be of great price, a garment of Gods own making, a garment that cost a dear price, the precious life and blood of a Saviour.

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In a word, for I muſt be brief, he is a garment of more worth then all the world.

Thirdly, Chriſt is a cheap garment, the cheapeſt garment that ever thou wereſt in all thy life; thou mayeſt have this garment, as we uſe to ſay for God a mercy, he is freely offered to thee: Ho, every one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money: come ye, buy and eat, come buy wine and milk without money, and without price.

Thou mayeſt have this garment for asking for; it is true, this garment coſt the deareſt price that ever any garment did, the Blood of God, one drop whereof is of more worth then ten thouſand Worlds; but Chriſtians, remember, this garment is paid for already, its purchaſed by God the Father for thee; ſhouldſt thou go about to buy it, thou couldſt never be able to purchaſe it; all thou haſt, nay, all that all the men in the world have, would never have been able to have bought this garment: it was onely the rich God, that God

who hath all, and is all, that was onely able to purchase this precious, this costly, this excellent, and this glorious garment; and yet notwithstanding all this, thou mayest have him for nothing, he is freely tendered and offered to thee in the Gospel of life: though it be a costly garment to God, yet it will be a cheap garment to thee; God hath paid all, and there is nothing at all left for thee to pay, or to do, but to take him and put him on.

Fourthly, Jesus Christ is a seamless garment, as Christ coat was seamless, so is his person seamless, there is no rent nor divisions in this precious garment; and as there is no rents nor divisions in Christ, so there ought to be none in Christians: if there be no rents nor divisions in the head, certainly there ought to be none in the Church, which is the body.

And here beloved, we might take up a sad and a bitter lamentation in in consideration of the sad rents and divisions that are now in the Church of Christ: whereas one saith, He is

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of Paul, and another of Apollos, are we not therefore carnal? 1 Cor. 1. Certainly beloved, these things ought not so to be, all the Saints of God, they shall all have one heaven, so they must all be saved by one faith: and therefore surely they should all be of one heart, if not of one minde; and therefore by the way, those who go about to make rents and divisions in the Church of God, doth not do Gods work, but the Devils: the spirit of God is not a spirit of division, but of love, of peace, and a pure minde; and as the Apostle Jude calls seducers and false teachers, ungodly men; and separates from the Church, are said by Jude in his 19. verse, to be sensual, and not to have the spirit.

And before I pass this point, I hope it will not be amiss to shew you the wickedness and sin of these who go about to make divisions in the Church of Christ.

And first of all, sowers of divisions are renters of Christ; it is a horrible violence offered to the Body of Christ, a dividing of Christ, as St. Paul calls it,

it, in 1 Cor. 1. 13. it would make Christ seem to be the head of two bodies, a most monstrous conceit indeed.

Secondly, it resisteth the commands of Christ, which is love, and oppoles the very end of Christ in dying for sinners, which was, that all his Saints should be one.

Thirdly, division in the Church is very dishonourable and injurious to the Church; for how can a body be rent and torn without prejudice: it hinders also the peace of the Church. Schismaticks, saith one, more oppoles the peace of the Church then heathens do; if the body be rent and torn, it is surely with much pain and smart; and tearing and renting in the church will surely cut the very heart of one that's a true Member of the Church. It makes the Saints mourn, and to be sure, it makes the Devil laugh; therefore let us labour to be rentless and seamless, as Christ is.

To this end, in the first place labour after holiness, division and separation is a badge and mark of unholi-

ness;

nels; children in unholines are ever men in malice.

Secondly, be not overtaken with new fancies and novelties; those new lights which hath set the Church of God so much on fire in these our dayes, have all been taken out of the dark Lanthorns of old Hereticks and Jesuits: all those lights which receive not their light from the word of God, are all false lights and vapors that onely appear on purpose to draw men out of the way. Truth should alwayes be imbraced, though it be never in so old a dress, they are itching ears that are most taken with novelties.

Lastly, divisions beget sensuality, sensuality usual follows seperation even at the heels, separating themselves, saith Jude, sensual, not having the Spirit: not to speak any more of this, our own sad experience hath too manifestly witnessed this for a truth. What horrid impiety, desperate villanies have been commited by wicked and ungodly seducers in our dayes, my heart trembles with the very thought thereof.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, Christ is a spotless garment, there is not so much as a spark or spot in this garment; and therefore it is, that the Saints are said in Scripture to be cloathed in white robes, Rev. 6. 11. and that he offered himself without spot to God, Heb 9. 14. and the Saints are said to be cloathed in fine linnen, white and clean, Rev. 19.14.

And as Christ is spotless himself, so he takes away all spots and defilements from his people, they are washed in his blood, and therefore are said to be clean by Christ himself, John 13. 10. John 15. 3. and therefore he is called the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world, John 1. 29. It was onely a sinless Saviour that could satisfie for, and take away the sins of sinful men.

If Christ had not been without spots himself, he could never have taken away our spots: he that was manifest, saith St. John, to take away our sin, in him was no sin, 1 John 3. 5. Christ hath suffered for us, saith St. Peter, 1 Pet. 2. 21, 22. who did no sinne,

sinne, neither was guile found in his mouth; it is onely the blood of Christ that washes, and needs no washing: if he had not been without sin, he could not have saved us from our sins; nay, he himself then had stood in need of a Saviour: and although he took upon him our nature, and was made flesh, yet the nature of Christ was a pure nature in it self; and therefore that of the Apostle doth most sweetly express this, where he sayes of Christ, that he in the likeness of sinfull flesh, condemned sin in the flesh, Rom. 8. 3. and though he was in all things like unto us, yet saith the Apostle, Heb. 4. 13. he was without sin.

Christ was not born in sin, as we are, he was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and borne of a pure Virgin; its true, Christ was a sinner, yea, the greatest of sinners by imputation, he having all the sins of all the Elect of God laid upon him.

But first, had not Jesus Christ been sinless in himself, he had never been able to have undergone so heavy a burthen: Christ suffered not for his

his own sins, but for our sins; He his own self (saith the Apostle) bore our sinnes on the Crosse. We indeed) saith the converted thief on the Crosse) do suffer justly, but this man hath done nothing amisse, Luke 23. 41. He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, saith the Apostle, 2 Cor. 5. 21. He did no violence, neither was there any guile found in his mouth, Isa. 53. 9.

Sixthly, Christ is a comely garment, a garment that will never be out of fashion; He is the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever: there is nothing so lovely and amiable in the eyes of Christians as Christ is. Christians I beseech you consider, you are never well drest till you have put on this garment, nor you shall never be blest without it.

Seventhly, Christ is a lasting, yea, an everlasting garment, a garment that will last thee as long as thou livest, and will never be the worse for wearing, but will alwayes be the better for wearing; the more thou wearest this garment the more glorious it will be: and as this garment will

will last thee as long as thou livest, so thou mayest carry it along with thee when thou dyest; thou canst not carry any thing out of the world with thee; for naked camest thou into the world, and naked shalt thou go out of the world; but if thou hast put on Christ as a garment in thy life, thou canst not leave him behind thee when thou dyest, thou shalt carry this garment with thee into the next world.

I should come now to shew you how this garment is to be worn, but I shall speak of that by way of Use and Application.

Now the Uses that I shall make of this useful point, shall be these.

Is it so that Jesus Christ is a Christians garment, then in the first place I beseech you observe the miserable and wretched condition of wicked and ungodly men; men out of Christ they are naked, and have not (as we use to say of some poor people) a rag to cover their nakedness withal. Ah! sinners, for the Lords sake, for your precious and immortal souls sake, I beseech you consider, and lay

to

to heart a little your own most miserable and sad condition, how will you be able to stand in the day of the Lords wrath, and how wilt thou be able to contend with the Almighty, when once he is angry, thou hast nothing to shelter thee against the storms and fury of the Lords indignation. I beseech you then as you love your own souls, that you would now put on the Lord Jesus Christ, & put him on, he is freely offered to thee, & then do not be so foolish, and Bedlam mad, as to refuse him, if thou doest thou art undone for ever: art thou naked, and wilt not thou take this garment of Christ to cover thy nakedness withall; consider a little I beseech thee thy own sad condition as thou art in thy self out of Christ.

In the first place thou art liable to all dangers, every sinner out of Christ lies open to every danger; every mercy thou enjoyest out of Christ is in wrath, thy preservation is but by common providence, and its curled as well as common, as one

saith

faith sweetly, Thy preservation is but a reservation of thee to the day of wrath, thou art kept, but remember, thou art kept but as a malefactor to the day of execution, thou hast nothing to guard thee from the wrath of God: it is possible thou mayest be secure in thy sin, but remember thy security is not from want of danger, but from the want of discovery of that danger which is every day and hour hanging over thy head, and ready to fall upon thee; wert thou but once seriously sensible of that danger which every day thou art in, I am confident thou couldst no more rest in thy sins out of Christ, then thou couldst go to bed when thy house is on fire about thy ears.

Secondly, thou art, if out of Christ, in the power of every Devil and every lust; thou art the devils for egress and regress, when he pleases thou art taken captive by him at his will, as the apostle expresses it, 2 Tim. 2. 26. Thou art like a Common without a hedge, a prey to every beast of prey; thou wilt not take Christ as a garment

thou wilt not let God be a hedge to keep thee from straying into sin, and God will not be an hedge to preserve thee from being destroyed in and for thy sin.

O sinner, thy condition is very sad and very dreadful, thou liest at the mercy of the devil every moment, at the cruel courtesie of every temptation; thou hast a hole it may be to keep thy Swine in, but if thou hast not a Christ to lodge thy soul in, thou art liable to all the curses in the book of God; how dreadful is it to want the benefit of every sweet promise in the word of God, to want a Jesus to deliver us from the wrath to come. Doest thou think thou canst be able to endure the wrath of God to all eternity; if thy foundation be not laid upon the rock of Christ, thy whole building will soon be destroyed, and thou wilt be found to be the veriest fool in the world; if thou art out of Christ thou canst never be safe, thou art a mad man, and thou delightest in thy own destruction.

Secondly, by way of motive, consider

sider I beseech you, Christ will not onely cover thy nakednes, and shelter thee from the wrath of God, but will be an ornament of grace and glory to thee for ever.

But how shall we get this garment of Christ, may some say? I see my own nakednes, but how shall I do to get this garment? I answer, in the first place, thou must beg it of God, thou mayest have it for asking for; ask and thou shalt have, it is freely offered unto thee.

Secondly throw away all thy own rotten rags of sin, thou must strip thy self even naked of all selfe-righteousnes; Christ will not be a garment to any but to such as shall first put off their own rags, throw away then all thy old rotten rags, and put on the Lord Jesus Christ; put him on, he is freely offered to thee, do not despise thy own mercy; get Christ for thy garment here, if ever thou expectest to have Christ for thy comfort hereafter. Remember without Christ there is no happines to be had hereafter, thou art miserable here, and

thou shalt be miserable to all eternity hereafter. O consider this, all ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you, Psalm 50. 22.

In the next place, is it so, is Christ a garment, then here is matter of great joy and comfort to those that are Christs: O happy Christian, God hath made a blessed exchange with thee, he hath taken away from thee thy own rotten filthy stinking rags, and he hath in the room thereof put thee on his own most glorious white Robes! O happy soul! O blessed exchange.

But before I proceed any further, I shall a little endeavour to give you some few, but brief directions for your better instruction and edification.

And first of all, hast thou put on the Lord Jesus Christ as a garment, O then for the Lords sake do not put him off again, keep him on while thou hast him on; children you know when they have gotten a new garment they do not love to put it off again,

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they would wear it alwayes if they might.

Secondly, hast thou put on the Lord Jesus Christ as a garment, then wear him cleanlily, have a care that thou doest not soil this precious garment; O do not dirty it, nor sully it. Men when they have gotten on their best garments, or any thing that's rare and choice, how curious, how careful, how circumspect are they, they will have a care where they go, and what they do so long as they have those garments on. Men will not go about to rake dunghills in silken garments, a little spot of dust is soon seen in a clean garment; do not do the Devils drudgery with the garment of Christ: O do not rake in the filthy stinking dunghills of sin, with the silken cloaths of Christianity upon thy back; remember such base things are too low, for such noble souls as Christians are, to be imployed in.

Thirdly, is Christ a garment, then wear him as a garment, put him not on as a cloak, but put him on as a

garment; remember, as one saith sweetly, as Christ is the best garment, so is he the worst cloak: for to make Christ and Christianity a cloak for thy sin, is the horridest thing in all the world. Those wolves who are in sheeps cloathing are the most dangerous wolves of all; to be Saints in appearance outwardly, and Devils in substance inwardly, O horrid impiety! Will you swear and lye, couzen and cheat, and do all manner of evil, and yet profess Christianity; O take heed of this, they that make Christ a Cloak for their sin, do manifestly shew that they never yet tasted of the love of God in Christ, in the pardoning of their sins; Christ is not a cloak to hide sin, but Christ is a garment to preserve us from sin; they that put on Christ as a cloak, never yet put on Christ as a garment.

Fourthly, is Christ a garment, and hast thou put him on, then wear him constantly, never put him off, he will last thee as long as thou livest, and longer too; thou canst not carry

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a rag of thine own clothes with thee out of this world? but thou mayest carry this garment with thee into the next world; thou mayest go to heaven with this garment upon thee, nay, thou shalt never get to heaven without it; put him on then, and never put him off, wear him every day, day by day, even to thy dying day, he will last thee as long as thou livest, and will be a comfort, yea, an exceeding great comfort to thee when thou dyest, and will be a glory, an everlasting glory to thee for ever in the world to come.

Fifthly, is it so, is Christ a garment? then here is matter of comfort to all that are Christs in times of danger and trouble; let me tell thee Christian, thou that hast put on the Lord Jesus Christ as a garment, thou art armed as well as cloathed, thou hast armour of proof upon thy back, such armour as never yet could be pierced, such armour as will keep off all the gun-shots of the Devil, and the world, be they never so great, be they never so furious, be they never

so many: thy garment Christian will keep out a shower, 1, and a storm too, nothing can pierce it, nothing shall be able to hurt thee if thou hast put on Christ, neither sin nor Satan: If God be for us, who can be against us, Rom. 8. 33. Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect? it is Christ that hath dyed.

First, thou hast put on Christ as a garment, he will defend thee 3le warrant thee, let come what will come: see what the Lord saith to such as are clothed with his Son, in Isa. 47. 1, 2. Fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.

And this was it which so ravished the hearts of the blessed Martyrs, and carried them through all their torments with so much joy and comfort; and so likewise the three Children in

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the fiery furnace, all the violent and scorching heats of those burning fiery furnaces, could not, nay did not hurt so much as the least hair of their heads; and the reason was, because they were the Children of the most high God, and were cloathed with the Lord Jesus Christ, as with a garment. So likewise Daniel in the Lions Den, he was defended from the fury of those raging beasts, by his being clothed with this garment of Christ.

In a word, let come what will come, let the Devil and all his instruments rage never so much, let the storms of persecution be never so hot, let the waves beat never so fiercely, thy house shall stand, and thou shalt be carried through all, because thy house, thy faith is built upon a Rock, even upon the rock of Ages, the Lord Jesus Christ. Men out of Christ are naked, they have nothing at all to defend them, all those rich and costly garments of the gallants of the world, be they never so rich and gaudy, are not half so costly as this garment is;

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for believe it Christian, it cost Christs precious Life and Blood to purchase it for thee.

Sirthly, is Christ a garment, then let us not be proud of our own garments: alas, what are they, nothing but rags in comparison of this garment of Christ, bodies of sin; sin was the first founder and inventer of them: if Adam had not sinned, he had never stood in need of a garment. A thief (saith one very sweetly) may as well be proud of his halter, as a man or woman may be proud of their garments; and let me tell thee, thou that art proud, thou art proud of that which is anothers, it is none of thy own, thou hast nothing of thy own to be proud with: what thou hast is but lent thee, and thou knowest not how soon the owner may take them away, and leave thee as naked as he found thee: and then if thou art found out of Christ thou art undone for ever! Woe, woe be unto thee, and that for evermore.

Seventhly, is Christ a garment, then I note from hence, that abundance

dance of outward enjoyments do nothing at all adorn a man, its onely the garment of Christ that will make a Christian lovely; earthly things they do not adorn us in the sight of God; it matters not whether we be rich or poor, naked or cloathed, in rags or in robes: I, but it matters whether thou beest in Christ or no; God will look upon thee onely as thou art cloathed with his Son: if thou art not found in Christ, cloathed upon with the glorious white robes of his righteousness, at the last day God will never own thee for his child, he will then say unto thee, Depart from me, I know you not.

Eighthly, I note from hence, that they that live in sin are none of Christs, they are not cloathed upon with this garment; Let every one (saith the Apostle) that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity. Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, (saith the Text) and make no provision for the flesh. Christianity and sin are no kin one to another, sin is a work of the night; and if ever thou wouldst put

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on the Lord Jesus Christ, thou must cast off and forsake all thy sins; but if thou wilt needs keep thy sorry rags of sin still upon thy back, let me tell thee, Christ will never be a Saviour unto thee, thou shalt have nothing to defend thee in the evil day of the Lords wrath.

In the last place, by way of motive, O that I could perswade you this day to embrace Jesus Christ, as he is tendered and offered unto you in the Gospel; wouldst thou put on the Lord Jesus Christ as a garment? then in the words of the Apostle, I beseech you, Cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light: Walk honestly, as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, and do not commit works of darkness at noon-day; even the light of nature should make men blush to commit sin in the very face of the Sun it self.

Remember, I beseech you, how unsuitable and unseasonable rioting and drunkenness is to the profession of the Gospel of Christ: Let every one (saith the Apostle) that nameth

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the name of Christ depart from iniquity: Christ will never be a garment to thee if thou delightest in sin, its impossible to serve God and Mammon, thou canst never wear the livery of Christ, add the livery of Satan together: as holiness is the badge and livery of Christ, so sin and wickedness is the badge and Livery of the Devil: in this the Children of God are manifest, saith the Apostle, and the children of the Devil: Whosoever doth not righteousness is not of God, John 1. 3, 10. and in the 6,7,8. verses of the same Chapter, Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not, and whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, nor known him: He that committeth sin, is of the Devil: Ye are of your Father the Devil, saith our Saviour to the unbelieving Jews, John 8. 44. and the works of your father ye will do: wicked men will do the Devils work, although they are sure to dye for it; The work of your father ye will do.

And let me tell you, beloved, they that will do the Devils work, must look for nothing but the Devils pay,

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and the Devill will be sure to give them their due at the last: And I beseech you remember what the wages of sin is; in Romans. 6. 23. The wages of sin is death, death eternal; the wicked in hell they are alwayes dying, and yet never dead; the torments of the damned in hell, as they are easeless, so they are endless. O consider this you that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you.

Wouldst thou put on the Lord Jesus Christ as a garment? then in the last place, and so I have done, Do not make provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof; spend not thy time in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, but casting off and abhorring all these unfruitful works of darkness: Labour to live up to that God who has so dearly loved us, and bought us with his own most precious blood; that so living here to all the intents and purposes of his Grace, and walking daily before the Lord in all manner of holiness and righteousness all thy dayes, thou mayest in the

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end of thy dayes here live and reign for ever with Christ in glory hereafter.

Now blessed are all those, and for ever blessed shall they be, who so live, and so walk, as that they may be truly said to have put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and do so give up themselves to be ruled and guided by him in Grace here, that so when they come to dye, they shall be found in Christ, cloathed upon with the glorious white Robes of Christ his righteousness, and shall for ever live and reign with Christ in Glory hereafter; to whom be Glory and Honour, for ever and ever. Amen.

FINIS.

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